

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

United States of America,

Plaintiff,

v.

Civil Action No.: 1:20-cv-1091 (LEK/DJS)

\$6,113 in U.S. Currency,

Defendant.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR FORFEITURE IN REM

The United States of America brings this verified complaint for forfeiture *in rem* against the above-captioned assets (the “defendant currency”) and alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

This is an action *in rem* brought pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(6) and Rule G of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty or Maritime Claims and Asset Forfeiture Actions. Forfeiture is sought of the defendant currency as money furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for a controlled substance and proceeds traceable to such an exchange, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841.

THE PARTIES

1. Plaintiff is the United States of America.
2. The defendant currency – \$6,113 in U.S. Currency – is in the custody of the United States.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1345 and 1355.

4. This Court has *in rem* jurisdiction over the defendant currency pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1335(b).

5. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1335 and 1339.

FACTS

6. Deshon Thomas has a long history of run-ins with the law. After evading authorities for almost a year in connection with cocaine trafficking charges, Thomas was arrested and convicted in 2018, and incarcerated in January 2019. He was released from prison in August 2019 and was under the supervision of New York State Parole until January 2020, when he was arrested in connection with the incident summarized below.

7. On January 17, 2020, Thomas's parole officer learned that Thomas had recently been fired from his job for allegedly dealing cocaine to colleagues. Accordingly, parole officers made an unannounced visit to Thomas's home, in Amsterdam, New York, on January 22, 2020.

8. When parole officers arrived at Thomas's home, they searched Thomas and found the defendant currency in his pockets, in the following denominations: forty-two \$100 bills; six \$50 bills; seventy-nine \$20 bills; two \$10 dollar bills; and three \$1 bills.

9. When asked how he obtained the money, Thomas told parole officers that it was all money he had "won from a casino."

10. Parole officers then searched Thomas's home, and uncovered in his kitchen cabinet 290 grams of a white powdery substance believed to be a "cutting agent" for cocaine, 72 grams of marijuana, two digital scales, three cellular telephones, and a grinder containing marijuana residue.

11. Parole officers then looked through the text messages on Thomas's phones and observed several conversations about drug sales.

12. Thomas plead guilty in Amsterdam City Court to Criminal Possession of Marijuana in the 4th degree in connection with the activities described above. He was sentenced to time served.

13. In June 2020, Thomas filed an administrative claim with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for the \$6,113 in U.S. Currency. Whereas Thomas previously told law enforcement that the defendant currency constituted casino winnings, he swore in his administrative claim, under penalty of perjury, that the defendant currency was money he had earned “working” and that he would prove this with his “pay stubs.”

CONCLUSION

14. The facts set forth above support a reasonable belief that the government will be able to meet its burden of proof at trial. Specifically, probable cause exists to believe that the defendant currency constitutes: (a) money furnished or intended to be furnished by a person in exchange for a controlled substance in violation of the Controlled Substances Act; (b) proceeds traceable to such an exchange; or (c) money used or intended to be used to facilitate a violation of the Controlled Substances Act.

WHEREFORE, pursuant to Supplemental Rule G, plaintiff the United States of America, respectfully requests that the Court:

- (1) Issue a Warrant of Arrest *In Rem*, in the form submitted with this Complaint;
- (2) Direct any person having any claim to the defendant currency to file and serve their Verified Claims and Answers as required by 18 U.S.C. § 983(a)(4) and Supplemental Rule G;
- (3) Enter judgment declaring the defendant property to be forfeited and condemned to the use and benefit of the United States; and
- (4) Award such other and further relief to the United States as it deems proper and just.

Dated: September 11, 2020

ANTOINETTE T. BACON
Acting United States Attorney

By: /s/Adam J. Katz
Adam J. Katz
Assistant United States Attorney
Bar Roll No. 517894

VERIFICATION

STATE OF NEW YORK)
)
COUNTY OF ALBANY)

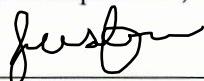
Amanda Corlyon being duly sworn, deposes and states:

I am a Task Force Officer with the Drug Enforcement Administration. I have read the foregoing Complaint for Forfeiture and assert that the facts contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, based upon knowledge possessed by me and/or on information received from other law enforcement officers.

Dated this 10 day of September, 2020.


Amanda Corlyon, Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of September, 2020.


Notary Public

Jessica Fereday
Notary Public, State of New York
No: 01FE6053483
Qualified in Rensselaer County
Commission Expires January 8, 2023

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Albany
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)(c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)
Adam J. Katz, Assistant U.S. Attorney (518) 431-0247
United States Attorney's Office, 445 Broadway,
Albany, New York 12207**DEFENDANTS**
\$6,113 in U.S. CurrencyCounty of Residence of First Listed Defendant Montgomery

(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE
LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 U.S. Government Defendant | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Diversity
(Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III) |

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)
(For Diversity Cases Only)

Citizen of This State	PTF	DEF	Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State	PTF	DEF
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES		
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance	PERSONAL INJURY	PERSONAL INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> 610 Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment		
<input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine	<input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane	<input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Med. Malpractice	<input type="checkbox"/> 620 Other Food & Drug	<input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust		
<input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881	<input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking		
<input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander	<input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 630 Liquor Laws	<input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce		
<input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud	<input type="checkbox"/> 640 R.R. & Truck	<input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation		
<input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending	<input type="checkbox"/> 650 Airline Regs.	<input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations		
<input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans)	<input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage	<input type="checkbox"/> 660 Occupational Safety/Health	<input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit		
<input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage	<input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV		
<input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits	<input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 395 Property Liability	PROPERTY RIGHTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 810 Selective Service		
<input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract	<input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights	<input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange		
<input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent	<input type="checkbox"/> 875 Customer Challenge		
<input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark	12 USC 3410		
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIONS	SOCIAL SECURITY			
<input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation	<input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence	<input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff)	<input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions		
<input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment	Habeas Corpus:	<input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923)	<input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts		
<input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment	<input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/ Accommodations	<input type="checkbox"/> 530 General	<input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIW (405(g))	<input type="checkbox"/> 892 Economic Stabilization Act		
<input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land	<input type="checkbox"/> 444 Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty	<input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI	<input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters		
<input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g))	<input type="checkbox"/> 894 Energy Allocation Act		
<input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights	FEDERAL TAX SUITS	<input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition	<input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)	<input type="checkbox"/> 900 Appeal of Fee Determination Under Equal Access to Justice		
			<input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes		
V. ORIGIN	(Place an "X" in One Box Only)				Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Original Proceeding	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Removed from State Court	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Remanded from Appellate Court	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Reinstated or Reopened	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Transferred from another district (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Multidistrict Litigation	
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION	Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 21USC 881					
	Brief description of cause:					
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	<input type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23		DEMAND \$	CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY	(See instructions):		JUDGE	DOCKET NUMBER		

DATE

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

09/11/2020

s/Adam J. Katz

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT #

AMOUNT

waived

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

LEK

MAG. JUDGE

DJS